BOLSBROOK LIBRARY
PACIFIC SCHOOL
OF RELIGION

OL. XVI

VINTER 1960-61

The MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

THE EDITOR'S PAGE 1

THE MINISTER AND HIS CRAFT

"The Pastor and Local Politics" —Donald J. Maccallum 2

"The Problem of the Ministerial Self-Image" —Gaylord B. Noyce 6

"The Resources of the Parish for Mental Health" —Allen Hackett 9

THE MINISTER AND THE CHURCH

"Crisis in the Christian Mission" —Philip Williams 15

"Our Ministry of the Spirit" —Arthur A. Rouner, Jr. 19

"British-American Preachers' Exchange" 23

THE MINISTER AND THEOLOGY

"My Son, My Son . . . " — James L. Kidd 25

THE MINISTER AND WORSHIP

"Further Thoughts on Worship in the Local Church" —Harland G. Lewis 28

THE STUDY GROUP

"A Home Study Course in Theology" —Robert Allard 32

"A Report From Wisconsin" 33

"Group Study on the Firing Line" 35

THE QUARTERLY FORUM

"A Code of Ministerial Ethics" 36

Letters to the Editor 37

SPECIAL FEATURES

"Kyrie Eleison" 8

Two Fables 14

"Prophet and Priest" 18

Fathers and Brethren 40

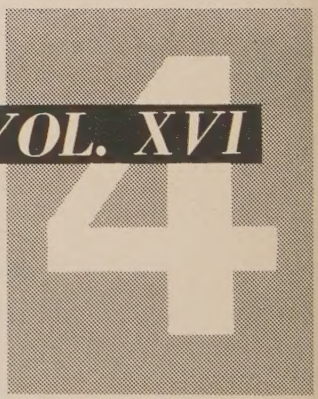
Issued In the Interest of The Parish Ministry

Editorial Board

NATHANAEL M. GUPTILL, *Chairman*
RICHARD P. CARTER
RAYMOND E. GIBSON
PAUL E. IRION
CHARLES W. SCHWANTES
HAROLD H. WILKE

Editorial Assistant

MARJORIE I. POWELL



WINTER 1960-61

THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

published quarterly for Congregational Christian and Evangelical and Reformed ministers by
THE COMMISSION ON CHURCH AND MINISTRY OF THE GENERAL SYNOD OF
THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

All communications should be addressed to the office of
THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY, Room 915, 287 Park Ave. So., New York 10, N. Y.

Single copy 25 cents. Annual Subscription One Dollar.

Re-entered as second class matter December 9, 1955 at the Post Office at Pittsfield, Mass., under act of March 3, 1879

Printed by THE SUN PRINTING CORPORATION, Pittsfield, Massachusetts

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

In This Issue

When the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY was launched on its new course under the auspices of the Commission on Church and Ministry of the United Church of Christ we issued a plea for material from our pastors. We think that this issue indicates how well that plea was answered. For the first time as we prepared the QUARTERLY for the printers we had much more than enough really good material than we needed. We hope it will continue to come in at this rate, but we hope that those whose articles are returned or held over for many months awaiting a future issue will understand and forgive us.

We wish to note that the FATHERS AND BRETHREN page is again filled by Harold H. Wilke as guest contributor. Dr. Wilke has just returned from a most significant journey around the world during which he visited chaplains and missionaries of the United Church as well as conducting a ministry of rehabilitation for the physically handicapped.

Our very strict rule against publishing sermons in the QUARTERLY is broken this month by the inclusion of James L. Kidd's contribution entitled *My Son! My Son!* We think the existential validity of this sermon delivered out of the life situation that gave it birth and meaning justifies the exception.

Harland G. Lewis's sequel to his former article on worship comes as the result of a real storm of interest blown up by him a year and a half ago in these pages. The form and content of worship in the United Church of Christ is a subject of great importance fraught with real excitement.

Philip Williams' article on *The Crisis in the Christian Mission* points out what many believe to be the greatest sickness of American Protestantism. During the nineteenth century our nation was isolationist, but our churches sent missionaries to every continent of the world. The twentieth century has seen our nation shake off its isolationism under the grim spur of necessity, but at the same time it appears that our churches have become not only national but parochial in the limits of their real concerns. Words like these should awaken us.

A Correction

In the summer issue of the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY we published a piece entitled *Two Pages from the Ecclesiastical Bird Book,* printed by permission of the ANGLICAN DIGEST, text attributed to Fred W. Putnam and drawings to Doug Anderson. The clever drawings are indeed the work of Mr. Anderson but the text is by Frank M. Weiskel, Pastor of the First Church in Newton, Mass., and was first published in CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS, February 3, 1958.

Joint Subscription to be Continued

Not long after this issue comes to your desk you will receive our annual appeal for subscriptions, and, as was the case last year, we will be offering a joint subscription to the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY and THEOLOGY AND LIFE. The latter publication, for those of our readers who are not yet acquainted with it, is the very fine quarterly published by the three theological seminaries of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. It complements our magazine very well, and together they provide the minister eight issues a year packed with material of significance and value to his life and work.

THE PASTOR AND LOCAL POLITICS

by DONALD J. MACCALLUM*

Independency is a safe political posture for the minister who is willing to pay the price of a partial disenfranchisement for the comfort of an up-to-date mugwumpery.

SOME ORDAINED MINISTERS have held public office and served with distinction but most pastors have neither the personal desire nor the popular mandate to engage in competitive politics. Yet the part the minister should play in local politics is controversial enough to prompt discussion.

Politics has been called "the language of evangelism;" by which is meant, I suppose, that to bear social fruit the gospel requires political planting. The Kingdom-kind-of-life is a social as well as a personal imperative for the Christian and as a social imperative its approximation requires political maneuver.

Thus the church and its pastors must dispute the notion that "religion and politics don't mix," for politics is the arena in which faiths compete for social victory. As Christian faith can rest content with nothing less than the total triumph of Christ, political involvement is inevitable and politics becomes, in truth, the language of evangelism.

But to what extent, if at all, should the pastor undertake to speak in so complex a tongue? Is politics the layman's game in which pastors shyly whisper their encouragement but leave the playing and the glory and the hurts to men less vulnerable than themselves?

The vulnerability of the pastor is illusion. Few men are so protected in our society, few have so little to lose from political forthrightness as the minister. Only foolish indiscretions can imperil his position. It is not the pastor that is vulnerable but his flock. Pretensions to prophecy imperil pastoral care. That is the politically-minded pastor's problem. He cannot be at the same time a political partisan and a father confessor.

Political leanings are not, in themselves, divisive but passionate espousal of a political cause will surely alienate to some extent parishioners whose passion to the contrary is no less intense and thereby strain the pastoral relationship.

A pastor can be a Democratic Daniel in a den of Republicans (or vice versa) —somewhat uneasy but surprisingly undevoured—so long as his parish loyalty is clearly primary. But a pastor can ruin his ministry by political preoccupation, even when his views coincide with his parishioners', if his parish ministry appears not to be his chief concern.

SO I WOULD PROPOSE as a first principle of political wisdom for ministers that no matter how intense their passion for social rectitude and no matter how indispensable their political contribution appears in their own eyes, their first and chief responsibility as ministers of Christ is to feed his sheep.

Assuming this priority, what part should the pastor play in politics, especially local politics? Recognizing that "politics is the language of evangelism,"

*Pastor, First Church, Greenfield, Mass. This article is a paper prepared for the Minister's Association of Franklin County, Mass.

the minister can learn the grammar of the political tongue so that he can understand its meaning.

The minister should not minimize the asset to his ministry of knowing his way around politically. Many occasions arise in the course of the minister's normal routine when political intelligence serves the interests of the Kingdom as well as piety and prayer.

Close acquaintance with government operations and with the people who constitute the political power structure of the community are healthy and helpful abrasives to ministerial naivete.

Until the minister feels at home in the political jungle, the fewer political opinions he expresses and the fewer political endeavors he undertakes, the wiser he will be.

So I would offer as a second principle of political wisdom for the pastor: Learn as much as you can about politics so that this "language of evangelism" becomes a facile and familiar tongue.

KNOWING THE POLITICAL ROPES, the minister faces the problem of political involvement not inconsistent with parish responsibilities. Ordinarily, as we noted, office-holding is not a live option, though some municipal offices such as the school committee can be carried out and have been carried out successfully by ministers serving as full time pastors.

The minister with a hankering to sit under the Golden Dome or high on Capitol Hill—and ministers have served in state and federal legislatures—will almost certainly face an either/or decision: the parish or the polls.

A good rule for the parish seems also to be a good rule for the minister in relation to the community: Don't do yourself what someone else will do just as well or better.

Extraordinary situations may arise where duty beckons the pastor into the halls of government but the minister must be very sure that it is duty, not pride, that does the beckoning.

I would suggest then, as a third principle for the minister's political guidance, that he should consider candidacy for public office only at the imperative insistence of his own congregation, which is likely to be long in coming!

THE MINISTER'S LIVELY political options narrow down to these questions: (1) Should he be frankly partisan in his political loyalties or remain aloofly independent of political label and partisan alignment? (2) Should he vigorously express his personal convictions on community issues which hold political implications? (3) Should he endorse and work for the election of candidates whom he prefers?

I

Political independency, i.e. the refusal to wear a party tag, is a popular and accepted form of political irresponsibility. The independent vote frequently decides elections. But the independent has no voice in the choice of candidates and shares no responsibility for the health of our party system of government.

Independency is a safe political posture for the minister who is willing to pay the price of partial disenfranchisement for the comfort of an up-to-date mugwumpery. He can sit on the fence-rail publicly and wait for the secrecy of the voting booth to jump off on one side or the other.

Independency may have its virtues but those who feel virtuous in their aloofness must admit their minimal participation in the processes of government and accept some share of blame for the defects of political parties for whose improvement they do not choose to work or even vote. The independent does not, in fact, escape partisanship. He merely evades the responsibilities of public identification.

Can the pastor afford to be publicly identified with a political party especially if his sympathies lie with the party less highly regarded by his congregation? I think he can. Indeed, I believe that an honest, though minority, political stand

gains more respect from both parish and community than an innocuous independency.

Political differences are so normal a part of American life that the minister need have no fear of wearing a different political label from some of his congregation or holding political views at variance with theirs so long as he has the sensitivity and good judgment to avoid acrimonious political dispute and does not take unfair advantage of his office to advance his political philosophy.

What people will resent, and rightfully so, is the slightest implication that the pastor's politics spring from the same source and claim the same sanction as his preaching.

II

What responsibility does the pastor have for speaking out vigorously on community issues with political implications? No one, least of all professional politicians, takes pulpit thunderings very seriously.

Everyone expects the Protestant clergy to urge no-license and anti-pari-mutuel votes. These have become ceremonial pronouncements of the Protestant pulpit and just because they are expected they carry little weight.

It is when the pastor opens his mouth to say the unexpected that he may be advised to "stick to the gospel," which means that he may say anything he likes so long as it is not germane to the political issues at hand.

Yet words are the vehicle of God's Word and the task of the minister is to interpret the divine Word in concrete situations of human choice. Not to speak when there is a word that must be spoken is to neglect one's pastoral as well as one's political obligations.

For the minister, as for others, there is a time to speak and a time to keep from speaking; and usually the less one speaks the greater the impact of utterance when the Spirit burns upon the tongue.

The pastor will do well not to offer constant commentary on the political scene but to speak with forthright vigor when conscience precludes silence. If there is some word from on high let it be uttered with prophetic scorn of consequence but let the pastor be very sure that what he has to say is not merely the braying of an opinionated ass.

This refers to speaking from the pulpit. Prophetic preaching has its place. It also has its price; and pity the would-be prophet who does not know the reward of the truth-tellers!

Political judgments which may not properly be uttered from the pulpit need not go unheard. The thoughtful pastor who would argue issues yet is too conscientious to press his views from his pulpit has other means of being heard.

Conversation, opportunities to speak to secular groups and the letter column of the newspaper provide means of expressing views on community affairs.

As a citizen, the minister need not hesitate to propound his views and he may from time to time discover that his articulation of feelings shared by many is much appreciated.

While the minister can never dissociate himself from his office, he is honorbound as well as wise to make it plain (unless he has been authorized by his church to speak on its behalf) that his views "do not necessarily reflect the opinion of his sponsor."

III

What about endorsing candidates and working for their election? Here is the place for the wisdom of a serpent. Ministers have a natural affinity for "reform" candidates who are likely to be political novices who will bring to public office an enthusiasm matched only by their ineptitude.

It is a strange paradox, but I think true, that the best men are not necessarily the best candidates for public service. The first requirement for public office is political competence. When this combines with sterling character, the community is blessed. But the choice is often between personal integrity and political

ability and the minister who rashly supports an honest incompetent may rue the day.

Also, the minister is susceptible to being used unwittingly by those whose interests are far removed from his. A candidate who says the right things may turn out to have the wrong friends and a gullible minister can find himself with strange political bedfellows.

Endorsement of candidates can be extremely risky for the minister who is not thoroughly acquainted with both the candidate and the reasons behind his candidacy.

Considering that the minister's endorsement is not likely to be of any great help and in some situations could be the kiss of death; and considering also that the candidate's discharge of his office might be a subsequent embarrassment to his clerical supporters, discretion suggests that the minister generally refrain from active support of candidates for local political office.

The minister can make a more significant contribution by suggesting to capable people that they consider public service and encouraging them when they do so. Should the pastor be active in the local party organization he may exert some influence on the candidates selected by his party. In both these ways, the pastor's contribution to the community will be more valuable than his endorsement of candidates at election time.

My fourth principle, then, is this: Let the minister be honest about his political philosophy; let him speak when he must, be silent when he can and let him unobtrusively work more for good government than for the political success of particular men.

PROTESTANT PASTORS HAVE so often assumed the role of guardian of the public morals that politicians tend to view the clergy as political gadflys who buzz angrily over moral misdemeanors but show no other signs of interest in the political welfare of the community.

If a politician deserves criticism when he is wrong, he deserves commendation when he is right. If bad policies should be opposed, good policies should be supported. If indignation is sometimes expressed, encouragement should often be offered.

In politics, as in other human relationships, consideration and thoughtfulness will achieve far more in the long run than a sternly critical attitude which shows little appreciation for the ambiguities and perplexities which confront the most principled politician.

As a final principle for the pastor to ponder, I would suggest the political applicability of a familiar rule: "Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them."

THE PROBLEM OF THE MINISTERIAL SELF-IMAGE

by GAYLORD B. NOYCE*

. . . . some will call him "Harry," some, "Pastor," some, alas, "Reverend," but for himself the minister must have a clearer image.

MINISTERIAL BREAKDOWNS, so much publicized, do not come from overwork. Any man without serious emotional conflicts can work a fifty or sixty-hour week today if men of the steel mills could work their seventy-two until 1920. A major part of the problem is to be found in the image of the minister—a self-image which is ambivalent, and parish images which are inconsistent, contradictory, and sometimes overpowering. The titles themselves show different emphases; to some the minister is "Mister," to the Lutherans "Pastor," to the Roman Catholic, "Father," to others "Doctor" and to many in our own parishes, just plain "Harry." There is need then for a clear self-image to stand up to the conflicting expectations directed toward the minister, lest inner conflict result when such images are internalized. A man can hardly be "good old Harry" and prominent civic leader, and radical social actionist, scholar, counselor and old-fashioned piety personified all at the same time. Combining the roles of pastor, prophet, and priest, he must know who he is.

It has been my experience first that there is a need for a strong self-image on the part of the minister, and secondly, that there is to be found today in growing ecumenical sentiment at the grass roots significant assistance towards this end.

I

THE MINISTER'S ROLE necessarily reflects our concept of the church. If the church's purpose is primarily sacramental, the priestly image is dominant; or if pedagogical the teacher in a doctoral robe will expound from an elevated pulpit. When the church becomes a social service center, "Harry" may preach on Sunday but promote "fellowship activities" the rest of the week in a large "plant." It is not easy to define a normative Protestant ecclesiology today, for the theology of the church is an evolving thing. The practical self-image cannot be the same for all men in the ministry for this reason aside from the diversity of gifts. First, then, any man facing the problem of the ministerial image must think through for himself the doctrine of the church.

If a contemporary study is to be cited, H. Richard Niebuhr's *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry,* states that the purpose of the whole church is to be the extension of the love of God and the love of neighbor. Niebuhr sees upon practical analysis that the contemporary minister is involved in this process in the local American church not primarily as priest or as teacher, but as servant of the total congregation and its orientation towards this goal. He is described as a "pastoral director." The name is not so important as the conception that the total congregation is serving the Kingdom of God in its approach to the world. To use the expression of Roy Pearson, the minister may be seen as a "minister to the ministering community."

The advantage of this conception is two-fold. First, it is theologically valid (even if to the high churchman it appears to deprive ordination of its uniqueness) because the priesthood of all believers is given clear and structural expression.

Secondly, it elevates to a meaningful level much of what the average minister, as a matter of fact, does find himself

*Asst. Director of Field Work, Yale Divinity School, New Haven, Conn.

called upon to do—administer a program and mend the fences of an organization. There *is* a ministry of the organization. That the New Testament includes such a role of ministry (e.g., I. Corinthians 12.28) is a comfort, because administration for the seminary-trained man can be a very frustrating thing.

II

How, then, should the contemporary minister face the problem of the ministerial self-image? His sanity will be best preserved if he will recognize these facts of life: (a) There is an unlimited amount of work that can be done and the minister, therefore, in contrast to the hourly wage-earner, cannot ever call his work completed. Study and visitation and counseling can stretch out almost ad infinitum. This problem of time the minister shares with other professionals. He can best settle on a schedule he works out for himself, with emergencies allowed to break into it. If a slack week comes he can still put in his hours and attempt to catch up on visitation, study, or the mending of weak fences.

(b) Secondly, there are certain basic skills that the minister must master and of which he must remain conscious—teaching, youth work, organizational efficiency, preaching, denominational ties, counseling, calling. This is the role of the pastoral director, in its minimal structure.

(c) Beyond that, the pastor must recognize the diversities of gifts, and seek to serve, with his own special competence, the work of the greater Church. Here may be found his ability as pastor or as preacher, teacher, youth advisor, counselor, student of social change. This specialization is justified first because here are unlimited needs in all these fields and because the minister cannot meet them all; and sceondly because the ecumenical concept of the church and the ecumenical movement of today are real enough that this can take place.

Specialization, of course, is readily practiced in a church with a multiple ministry. But I am suggesting that in the average city or town or rural area there are opportunities which the specialist can meet if he sees himself with a particular trait of strength in his "image." Once the specialties are known some programs will be developed in individual churches which are not found in others. Referral will be made from one church to another in effect or in actual fact. I am suggesting that every church does not have to be an all-round church in exactly the same way as every other. If we as Protestants were to cling to a geographical parish system as do the Roman Catholics for the most part, this would not be as true. But when churches are as plentiful on the landscape and the cityscape as they are in our country, there need be no guilt felt by the Reverend Mr. Smith when he refers a counseling problem to the Reverend Mr. Jones in the church down the block (of another denomination!), or when one church adds a specialized educational program without popular appeal but a program pointed at a special breed of sophisticated adults unreached by any other. The specialist may make his contribution to students on a campus in the community; to the sick, because he spends extra time in the hospitals; to the youth work of a town (as a UCYM advisor); in denominational work.

Denominational materials sometimes fail to recognize that this choice is one that has to be made by the local minister and by his church. Program guides occasionally make suggestions as if every church could and *should* have a given type of program, whether it is evangelism, stewardship, social action, or what have you. It is not so; and wishing that it were so has driven many a minister to the breaking point.

III

WHAT IS THE MINISTER'S IMAGE then? In the eyes of others, multiform indeed —some will call him "Harry," some "Pastor," and many, alas, "Reverend." It is the early discovery of most ministers that they are addressed in different ways by different individuals. They learn that the term of address reflects something of the image people hold for the minister and something, too, of the needs they have which can be met by the church.

But for himself the minister must have a clearer image. First, he must maintain an image of broad and general competence in the work of the ministry as a channel for the zeal born of his personal faith. Secondly some special bent or interest through which he may make his personal contribution to the wider work of the Church. A man must perform the minimal priestly, pastoral, and prophetic roles as well as he can. But also, combining these with theological reflection and self-understanding, he must develop a self-image of his own, lest he be lost by trying to respond to too many ambiguous images which would impose themselves upon him from without and from within.

KYRIE ELEISON

Was it only one spear
Cut a tunnel into His side?
Was it only one crown
Branded His head with a halo?
Would that it were;
Then we could rest.
Lord have mercy upon us.

Was it only one man
Kissed Him with flabby lips?
Was it only one rock
Cracked under the tree?
Would that it were;
Then we could sleep.
Christ have mercy upon us.

Was it only one sky
Turned black because of death below?
Was it only one hill
Flowed red with life spilled over it?
Would that it were;
Then we could forget.
Lord have mercy upon us.

—JOHN E. NUTTING
Hyde Park, Vermont

THE RESOURCES OF THE PARISH FOR MENTAL HEALTH

by ALLEN HACKETT*

. . . in any group there are some who cope well all the time, some who cope well most of the time, and some who cannot cope at all. The church has a contribution to make to each of these groups.

AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS of Nazareth we have a special concern for mental health. For a great many of his miracles resulted in the healing of those who were "possessed by demons." "And they came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the man who had the legion." (Mark 5:16)

Pastoral counseling is no fad, no frill (though we sometimes make it seem like an occult art, or a new discovery dating from the beginning of our own ministry, whenever that was!) On the contrary, the "cure of souls" and the healing of the mentally diseased have always been at the center of Christian concern. I hasten to add that we ministers are not to think of ourselves as the equivalent of psychiatrists, but only as adjuncts, almost "orderlies," in the cure of the mentally ill. With something like 800,000 persons currently in mental hospitals in the United States and with many more—including ourselves— subject to pressures that sometimes rupture the bulwarks of our strength, there is need for us all—families, schools, community, social work, agencies, psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric social workers, hospital chaplains, and, last but not least, parish ministers.

Those of us who serve on the staff of the Pastoral Counseling Service of the Metropolitan Church Federation in St. Louis have learned many things from our psychiatric consultants. One is a new respect for the life of the parish as a supportive help in counseling. Our staff may be discussing some person who has cut himself off, perhaps by repeated infidelity, or by an immature way of dealing with his responsibilities. Again and again Dr. Ernest Parsons, our senior psychiatrist, will say something like this: "Can't we get the church on the job here? If that minister could assign this couple to a pair of sponsors who would nurse them along, see that they get to church and feel themselves at home there, that would fortify the counseling process." If our psychiatrists are pointing out to us how much the parish can accomplish in this area, how much more we parish ministers ought to value the mental health resources which we handle every day of the world!

I

IN ANY GROUP—the parish we serve, the community in which we live—there are some who cope well all the time, some who cope well most of the time, but with occasional lapses from effectiveness, and some who cannot cope at all. Webster tells us that "cope" is related to the French word *"couper"* to cut. In my mind's eye I see a skillful fencer, who is quick with eye, wrist, and lunge. The dictionary definition of "cope" is: "to strive or contend on equal terms, or with a measure of success; to match, to equal." In this sense, then, let us think of our parishioners—and of ourselves. We are able to cope; or sometimes able to cope, or unable to cope. I believe that the church as a local congregation or a parish has a contribution to make to each of these groups.

Those who are relatively secure and effective can be reinforced, (or toned down) by bearing responsibility in the

*Pastor, Pilgrim Congregational Church, St. Louis, Mo.

life process of the church. "We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves." (Rom. 15:1)

Those who are adequate most of the time, but suffer occasional lapses (most of us I presume) can be helped through the therapy of parish life. The slips can be made less frequent, and we can come back to the security we have temporarily lost.

In the case of those who are unable to cope, the parish has a special role. First, the life of the parish helps us to detect illness. Here, as in cancer or pneumonia, there is a much better chance of cure when the disease is discovered in its early stages. The minister, like the family physician, ought to be able to read the danger signs—unusual nervousness, deep depression and talk of self-destruction; delusions of personal reference (are they talking about me?); manic activity—even in cutting stencils for the church office. The minister and his co-workers have an advantage over the family physician in that we see the parishioner in action and over a sustained period of time. Thus any sharp deviation of behavior or attitude is more clearly visible.

On detecting some cause for concern, the minister will try to find an occasion for a leisurely talk, casually carried out, in which the person has the opportunity to spill out his feelings in a climate of understanding, acceptance and confidence. Then, if the parishioner acknowledges his need and takes up our offer to help, we make contact with a psychiatrist or a clinic which we know to be respectful of personality, and accepting of Christian values.

While the parishioner is under treatment, the minister will maintain a supportive role, but he must keep hands off the specifics of the counseling. "Too many cooks spoil the broth." The local pastor will be more than hospitable to any insight or information the professional therapist chooses to share—normally at the conclusion of the cure.

At this point the minister will have perhaps his greatest opportunity, always with the parish beside him. For then the counselee is ready to resume his tasks and his place in the church community, probably not all at once. Chaplain William Rogers has indicated some of this in his perceptive article in the *United Church Herald* of May 7, 1959.

II

Now let us take a closer look at the function of the parish in building mental health. We begin by considering the parish, the local congregation as a whole. What *is* the parish?

It is a group of people—usually several hundreds—who are drawn together in a given area. The purpose is a spiritual fellowship around agreed-on goals. Chief of these goals is a personal relationship with Christ as our Savior and with those who love and serve Him.

When we speak of parish life we have in mind two broad categories—the life of the congregation as a whole, including worship, Christian education and evangelism; and on the other hand the life of organizations within the Church, from boards and committees to Brotherhoods, Women's Auxiliaries, classes, circles and the rest.

In the first category, the life of the congregation as a whole, I believe we have a vast resource for mental health in the simple fact of *identification*. Here is a person somewhat battered by some outward situation and beginning to conceive of himself as rather a no-account. We do not lift him up necessarily by saying, "Come to our church and you'll meet some very nice people." That may be what would scare him the most. But he ought to feel lifted up if we say "Christ has chosen you and has gathered our congregation together—sinners all, but seeking a fuller life and believing in the forgiveness of God." Our battered friend might be ill at ease among "nice people" —but quite at home in a "fellowship of penitent and forgiving people."

Once again people may be given new courage when they are asked to do a hard job. When Tom Sawyer got his friends to *pay him* for the privilege of whitewashing that fence, he was using eminently sound psychology. Would new members feel enhanced by the invitation to "Come and sit in the softest pews in town, and hear the most soothing music and the most comforting sermons?" Men and women might respond—and feel more like human beings—if we were to say "Christ has called some of us to tackle a particularly discouraging job in a depressed area, and we believe you have the stamina to participate in this difficult venture."

The whole question of a group's self-image is tricky in the extreme. But it is our calling to fail with Christ rather than to succeed with the world. Mental disorders went *down* in Britain during the worst days of the Blitz, when people were facing death every day and every night. The intimate ties that are forged as real people cope together with real difficulties—evangelizing the community, building decent inter-group relations in the crowded city—these ties have tremendous tensile strength, and they greatly build up our mental health. In extreme cases, our hard jobs can lead to a kind of corporate paranoia! I suppose the ideal is a difficult job in which we can see some measure of success.

Corporate worship is the central experience in the group life of a parish. Mental health is not the chief aim of worship, for we come to praise God and to learn His way for us alone and together. However, in group singing (and how poorly many of our congregations sing); in corporate confession and in the assurance of pardon (not from the minister, but from God to minister and people alike) there is an identification and a sustenance that ought to reinforce our mental health. Even a period of silence together, after the pastoral prayer, assures us of at least one lucid interval during every week. It helps us to know ourselves, and to be at one with our neighbor in the pew and with God who reaches out to each one.

The sermon may minister more to our mental health as pastors than to that of the parishioners. There is a verse in the Book of Job which fits our condition: "I will speak that I may be refreshed" (32:20). But if the sermon is a genuine encounter between seeking minds and a self-revealing God, then there is an element of suspense, an element of joy in discovery, and, incidentally, a vividly interpersonal relationship taking place between pastor and parishioner. If our member's problem is loneliness, then he ought to feel that he is not alone when for twenty-five minutes on a Sunday an old friend opens out a new thought in a face-to-face encounter. Corporate worship, whether it be an austere Quaker meeting or a high-church mass, carries with it the possibility that the lonely may identify with the group; that the solitary may truly be set in families; that the perplexed may see a glimmer of light; that the unforgiven may find new power, and that the proud may be put down from their seats.

III

For some few of our parishioners, worship is their entire church experience. For most, however, there is what my Methodist friends refer to as "the work" —that is to say, the Church school and the choir, the whole series of boards and committees, the guilds and circles, the women's fellowship and the men's brotherhood. In these groups there is a chance for a far closer identification than in the congregation as a whole. This closer link is often necessary when the size of the church is great. When the total unit is less than, say, 300 and the pastor knows his parishioners very well (and they know each other very well) there is no overwhelming need for so many subgroups. This does not mean that the church of 300 or less does not have the whole string of organizations. In my

observation, any church that is large enough to employ its own full-time pastor is likely to want and to have the whole panoply of organizations—whether they are needed or not!

These groups can be supportive and reassuring to the individual—or the reverse. Anyone who moves into a new community and finds tight groups within the church—and fails to crack them open—may feel more rejected than ever. We have a coffee hour after church each Sunday in the hope of giving newcomers a friendly welcome in a strange city. Most do find it friendly. But one newcomer from another state, who had been troubled with depression, told me later that he stood in the middle of the big room all alone, while the church people who hadn't seen each other all week visited with each other and left him in the cold! From the fact that he told me this you will judge that he finally braved it out and became a part of our generally warm and accepting fellowship. But you recognize the peril I am sure. To correct it is very ticklish, for if you say from the pulpit: "Look here, friends, there may be a stranger among us—greet him warmly," then the stranger may feel "Yes, you are greeting me this way just because the pastor told you to!"

I am sure you have noticed, as I have, a sharp trend away from the formal organizations—circles, guilds, brotherhoods—and toward small face to face groups. John L. Casteel of Union Theological Seminary in New York has brought together several such experiments in his book *Spiritual Renewal through Personal Groups.* In the chapter on *Colonies and Retreats,* Gerald Jud writes: "The ministry of our church to those in crisis is two-pronged. As pastor I utilize the best counseling technique I know to help those in trouble, providing a relationship wherein they may face honestly their true condition, and mediating forgiveness and acceptance. The church provides loving community in the small groups wherein acceptance and forgiveness and the sense of belonging may increasingly be experienced, and where the individual may have opportunity for continued growth and development in the Christian life." (p. 80)

No two churches will have the same pattern or the same experience. But I am convinced that if we take a candid look at the organizational pattern of our churches from the viewpoint of mental health—and in particular from the perspective of family mental health, we will become far freer and more creative; we will de-emphasize the structured and the formal, with its danger of rigidity and exclusiveness. We will emphasize the unstructured and the informal.

We have warrant for the supportive power of small groups in the band of the disciples, in the Apostolic church, in the early "classes" of Methodism, and in more recent experiences with "cell groups" and Bible Study groups. A fully rounded church life will enable us to "praise God in the great congregation"—and to know at the same time the power of Jesus' promise that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

IV

We come now to the role of the pastor as a person, both in the unfolding group life of his congregation, and in his capacity as a counselor. The pastor has a subtle role. For he is both the leader and a participant, both the fountain-head of insight and sensitivity, and one of the persons who also gets hurt and who also experiences frustration and aloneness. Most of us will move like a sailboat going against the wind—now on one tack and now on another; now suggesting, devising; now listening, experiencing. Always the minister *is* a person, with the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as other persons. Sometimes he has the privilege of carrying tables or changing the letters on the out-door sign; and sometimes the responsibility of withstanding the whole congregation like the brazen wall of which Jeremiah speaks.

In a word the pastor as spiritual director will be alert but not facile, ever aware of what a situation means to the persons involved; exacting of himself and of others, but not punishing. He may be out of step because, in Thoreau's words, "he is listening to a different drum." Because of our burdens and our sins we will be often in prayer and sometimes in eager search for counselors, older, and younger, and our own age!

But over and above this delicate function in the group life of the church, the pastor will be a counselor. Hopefully he will not "know all the answers" or "heal the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, 'peace, peace' when there is no peace." He will be one with his people in their need. He will meet the counselee as a fellow-sinner standing in the need of grace. But he will not participate in the sin. He will above all maintain his own integrity as a pastor. He will be humble enough to turn over those who need healing for mental disease to doctors who have paid the price in a longer discipline and in a different school. He will refer those who have family problems to a social worker who can meet their need with wider knowledge and more precise skill. He will maintain at all costs the sacredness of the confessional. He will avoid all temptation to spice his sermons by thinly disguised pastoral confidences.

There is a special kind of situation which may suggest still another kind of help. I refer to the problem that arises when a member of the inner group of those who are church officers or church school teachers has a problem which he would like to bring. The very closeness of the relationship makes it difficult for him to confess his need, or for you to meet the need. In this case there can be a pooling of pastoral counseling service—perhaps informal, perhaps formal. Referral to a trusted colleague can be a satisfactory solution in those instances where the pastor is himself too close to the situation.

Our final word on the role of the pastor is this: Try as he may to make his part fraternal rather than paternal, he ends up in the eyes of many of his parishioners as a "Father figure." The grace with which he handles that role in his own family and in the larger church family will determine in large measure his usefulness as a counselor and his helpfulness as the guide in the group life of the church. Fathers we are, in fact or in name—yet under one Father who feels sharply and personally the needs of all His children. God offers us a forgiveness which in itself begets gratitude. "If Thou shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared."

God give us strength, then, to continue our ministry to those who can cope most of the time, or some of the time, or none of the time. God give us strength as we worship together. God sustain us when we meet in face-to-face groups around some worth-while endeavor or in some searching study of God's way for the world. God help us to relate all our tasks to the growth and nurture of souls —not forgetting our own battered and weary spirits. Our hope and our faith are that through our ministry some will see Jesus and sit at his feet, clothed and in their right mind!

FABLE NUMBER ONE

Once upon a time there was a loyal church member.
At least he said he was a loyal church member.
"I'm a loyal church member," he said.
"I attend off and on."
"I certainly wouldn't live in a town where there was no church," he said.
His wife agreed with him.
She was a loyal member of the Women's Fellowship.
"I'm not a leader," she said, "But I do like to attend off and on."
"The last time I went was in April."
"I must attend again soon," she said to her husband.
"And I must start going to church again," he replied.
The next week his wife came home with some bewildering news.
"I went to the Women's Fellowship meeting today," she said.
"And there wasn't anyone there!"
"There wasn't any meeting at all," she said.
"People attend off and on," said her husband.
The next Sunday he went to church.
He hoped he would hear some good church music.
But there wasn't any organist.
There wasn't any choir, either.
The minister didn't show up.
("Some Sundays you just can't make church," he had said that morning.)
Since there wasn't any service, the loyal church member went home again.
He told his wife what had happened.
But he had an explanation for it.
"People attend off and on," he said.

FABLE NUMBER TWO

Once upon a time there was another loyal church member.
He didn't believe in pledging for every Sunday.
He always had an answer ready for the Every Member Canvass.
"I don't believe in pledging for every Sunday," he said.
"I give when I go," he said.
One Sunday he went to church.
The building was run-down.
The door was locked.
There was a sign on the door:
"For the benefit of those who like to support the church once-in-a-while,"
(the sign said)
"This church will be available once-in-a-while."

MORAL: The efforts of those who support the church *regularly* . . .
make it possible for those who support the church *once-in-a-while* . . .
to have anything to support.

—Richard B. Kozelka, *Pastor*
Park Hill Church, Denver, Colo.

CRISIS IN THE CHRISTIAN MISSION

by PHILIP WILLIAMS*

The proportion of the world's population called "Christian" is in decline in our time.

DOCTOR SAMUEL JOHNSON ONCE said, "He who generalizes is an idiot." The words may well fit things said here. But Johnson's word is itself a generalization, showing how inevitable such statements are for us finite men who may see and speak truth but can never see or speak *all* the truth. The generalizations involved in all that follows are that (1) the Christian movement in the world today is in reverse; (2) America, despite and possibly because of its surface religious revival, is at the center of this reversal; (3) our country's own crisis—in morale as well as morals—comes about in part precisely because the churches have turned from their world mission, forsaken their God-given world destiny to sun themselves in present prosperity; and, (4) seen from Asia, God surely seems ready to spew from his mouth this mess of lukewarmness.

To find some of the dimensions of our crisis, we have been forced to face what may be the four fateful facts of our age as they confront us on Japan's frontier of the Church:

1. We are, in a way, the luckiest generation in Christian history, for *in our time* the world-wide Church has finally arrived as a reality after twenty centuries of witness by the saints who suffered to carry their mission before us! The rise of this new world community, cutting through man made "curtains" and bringing together men of every nation on earth, was only a goal to be viewed with hope from afar through thousands of years of the history of humankind. This hope has been transformed to a living fact in our generation. We who are called to be part of the people of God—not through our merit but only through the greatest mystery of history—must see the ultimate meaning of our lives in the roles we play in this central drama of mankind. With what joy and courage we ought to march in this revolution at the heart of history! Personally we feel the deep challenge of sharing this task within Japan's tiny church which is freighted with crucial responsibilities, bearing what well may be the light for all Asia.
2. Given all the mass media, this world Church bearing history's destiny can address more people in an hour *in our time* than the first apostles could reach in hundreds of years. We have experiences daily to indicate how the youth of Asia are waiting to hear that Word through which all other words have their meaning. In Japan, with the highest literacy in the whole world, radio and television, movies and newspapers and magazines (with the greatest circulation in the world), are molding the character of an ancient culture through channels of communication with power and influence undreamed of in an earlier day.
3. But the fearful fact comes home to us that for the first time in years Anno Domini, the proportion of the world's

*Missionary, Sendai, Japan.

population called "Christian" is in decline *in our time!* What a grim fact this—with all it says of our failure to recognize priorities which God is laying upon Asia and Africa as frontiers of influence in our world. Despite the warnings of the greatest poets and philosophers and historians and statesmen of the so-called West, we in our own period of extraordinary influence around the globe have failed to communicate our deepest understandings, the central truths of the meaning of man and the meaning of history. Hence, we face the crisis in which the tools of technology, which could only arrive through our civilization based upon the Bible, may be taken from our hand and turned to the service of communism and the other religions which today show far greater advances than we may find in the Christian movement in Asia. Japanese Christians, still numbering only one-half of one percent of the population, symbolize this problem of tiny minority group life, though—God be praised—they have social influence incredibly great in proportion to their numbers.

4. Directly related to this Christian retreat is the report that church budgets in the United States—at precisely this crucial moment—show proportionately forty percent *less* money being consecrated for the Christian mission abroad *in our time* than at the low point of the Depression of the 1930's. With God's finger on our land for burden-bearing as never before, it seems we must admit that an "America First" policy prevails in the churches. The drop in levels of support from American churches for Christian work abroad has been driven painfully home to us here in Japan, even within the past few weeks, as we have been advised to prepare for curtailment of some of the aid by which Christian schools and churches have been sustained. As a colleague out here said recently, "We are trying to play a role in a spiritual war for the soul of Japan, armed with bows and arrows, in a jet-age."

If these are some of the aspects of the crisis, particularly as pertaining to the American churches, where ought we to begin in reappraisal of our missionary calling?

The more we know of the world mission of the Church, the more we realize that it is finally God's cause and not ours. It is just for this reason that we can never come to the end of this mission; the more we know of God's work for us the greater our responsibility becomes to share this recognition with all the world. Perhaps this paradox of the way in which the Christian mission is the very meaning of our lives and yet not something we do but something to be done through us is best described by the great poet, T. S. Eliot, in the concluding portion of his book *The Idea of a Christian Society.*

> "The Church is not merely for the elect—in other words, those whose temperaments bring them to that belief and that behavior. Nor does it allow us to be Christians in some social relations and non-Christian in others. It wants everybody, and it wants each individual as a whole. It therefore must struggle for a condition of society which will give the maximum of opportunity for us to lead holy, Christian lives, and the maximum of opportunity for others to become Christian. It maintains the paradox that while we are each responsible for our own souls, we are all responsible for all other souls. . . . And—another paradox—as the Christian attitude towards peace, happiness and well-being of peoples is that they are a means and not an end in themselves, Christians are more deeply committed to realizing these ideals than are those who regard them as ends in themselves."

Our mission, the world Church, the peace of the world which this new com-

munity seeks to make secure—none of these are ends in themselves but they are tremendously important responses on our part to the Will of God who "so loved the *world* that He gave his only Son." We are terribly prone in our time to enlist God in the service of our national cause, but the time has come to see that our very destiny depends upon enlisting ourselves and all our resources in God's cause, which is His mission to all mankind. All the greatest achievements of the heritage we cherish have been made by men who have drawn their inspiration from this sense of God's destiny. Consider only the great poets of our language, how our greatest writers have written their finest works to advance this cause, from Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton, to Tennyson, Browning, Eliot, and the most modern of our poet prophets. S. T. Coleridge said it most simply: "The world was made for the Gospel."

We who call ourselves Christians have this tremendous duty and destiny today. How heavily this responsibility rests on America will be seen the moment we realize the special degree to which God has blessed us for the promotion of His mission in our time. Though, like the prodigal in the parable, we have for the most part squandered away our substance in riotously selfish life, God *has* laid his hand upon us and we Americans must turn to accept ourselves in this moment of history as a people of special destiny. Whenever we confuse this call with our national political ambitions, we miss the major meaning of the term. Governments rise and fall—our imperialisms of economy and politics wax and wane—but the march of Christ's Church above cultures remains the central thread of history—a history in which the very stream of time itself divides into periods before and after the birth of our Lord.

Well we know that many are sounding the trumpets of alarm in the United States, but the feeling comes to us in Japan with striking pathos that many churches are still asleep. From these shores we can realize how much our homeland is on the spot. The vision of broken Rome and other civilizations lost through decadent resort to self indulgence blazes before our eyes. God *has* given us the chance in our time to be his special servant in the mission to all nations. How ironic that when our government understands better its responsibilities abroad than ever before, our churches should waver now in disastrous retreat.

As it applies to Christians individually, we might consider one final aspect of the crisis in the Christian mission which comes to us with the statistics on giving for the overseas mission of the Church in our denomination. The figure is under $2.00 per person per year. One is hard pressed to find anything else on which a man spends so little! Surely movies receive more in a month from the average person; perfume, powder, shoe polish might bear comparison. One must add that the pittance-level giving referred to here does not apply for Roman Catholics or Protestant Fundamentalists. Judged by the tremendous outreach of these groups in Japan, their sense of stewardship in the Christian world mission springs from a much deeper realization that this *is* the cause at the very center of history's meaning—the great Event taking place within and above the rise and fall of all other earthly powers.

The record we study in the Bible is that of a Church whose whole history from the beginning is its effort to lose its life—as its Lord Himself had done—for the witness "to the Gentiles," for the "salvation of the whole world." Every aspect of the Church's life carries the implicit dimension of a universal call, and it is only our own conservativism that permits us to be content with a Church confined to white-skinned Gentiles today. Our message is one of a God whose plan is to unite all things in Christ. We may proclaim this message with no sense at all of superiority. Paradoxically, it seems that we vessels for the message may be most subject to the judgment it brings against mankind, even as the Isra-

elites saw themselves to be most chastised just because they were most involved with the God who calls them. If there is a destiny given us today by the message of Scripture, it can only be a calling comprehended under the rubric of a mystery of history, a sign of God's grace and by no means a claim of goodness we might try to make on our own behalf. Our call has no marks of imperialism but must bring us an ability to out-love all the enemies within us and without who press to worship of idols, lesser gods than the one almighty Creator, Ruler, Redeeemer. Only the Bible can be our guide book in our mission under such a cause.

PROPHET AND PRIEST

And God said, "Go and tell the people."
And my heart leapt that I had been chosen, yet I tried to hide.
I tried to hide for the people did not want to hear.
But the voice was insistent. "Tell of my love,
Tell of my concern,
Tell of my tears over unbrotherliness,
Tell men to live together peaceably,
Tell them to turn to me and find life,
Tell them that I care not for color or creed,
But only that they come to me as my children."
And my heart sang and I told the people, and they said:
"Speak no more, for you do not have the truth.
Black men shall dwell with black men and white with white.
That's the way God wants it.
Men must be free and honorable even if we must kill and be dishonorable to convince them of it,
That's the way God wants it.
We must build our church for ourselves that we might be glorified,
That's the way God wants it.
Speak no more of these things;
of love,
of brotherhood,
of justice.
You are a priest, comfort us, we who are weary of the world.
Upbuild us, we who are tired from treading on other men.
Tell us of God, but only what we wish to hear."
And God said, "Go and tell the people."
And the people said, "Speak no more."
And I bowed my head and said, "Forgive me."

—Robert F. Hardina*

*Minister of Christian Education, Payson Park Church, Belmont, Mass.

OUR MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT

by ARTHUR A. ROUNER, JR.*

. . . if we are to be a people of the Spirit we must insure that our ministry is a ministry of the Spirit.

THERE IS A LOT OF TALK these days about "communicating the gospel." Not a minister among us is without some genuine concern about the problem of "getting across." From the ivied walls of the seminaries comes the cry, that "the church of today is irrelevant. It speaks no word of power to the housewife in her home, to the artist at his easel, to the workman at his bench, to the executive at his desk. The church and its ministers are in danger of becoming pointless, powerless people."

We would like to say it isn't so. We would like to say: "You do not know whereof you speak! Come and see *my* people, examine the life of *my* church!" But then we recall one of those painful conversations with one of those people —one of those who we thought really understood the gospel—and we remember the sinking feeling with which it dawned upon us that, for all our confidence and all our great expectations, this man had missed the point. "He has been listening to my sermons all these years and still he doesn't understand what I've been saying!"

We *know* it is true. We are *not* communicating the gospel. But the fascinating phenomenon of recent years has been the way we have tried to *meet* the criticism. Some have even said "the days of preaching are over! Why should we even *try* to speak through preaching? The new way, the twentieth century way, is to speak through symbols. It is liturgy we need. Cut down the sermon. The cross, the colors of the year, the kneeling prayers, the antiphonal responses, the aesthetics of art and architecture will speak our message." And by a multitude of mechanical manipulations we have tried to tell our Word.

Perhaps we are succeeding. Certainly there is much that is helpful and hopeful among the churches today. But, for all our emphasis on liturgy, for all our workshops on "communication," and for all our experimentation with radio and television and the rest—one thing we have forgotten. One thing which alone can really communicate the gospel we have forgotten.

This is the Spirit of Jesus Christ within us. The apostle Paul once asked "Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed?" And I wonder if some of us ministers are not like those early Christians who answered: "We have not so much as heard that there be any Holy Spirit!"

I suspect it is the presence of God's Spirit for which men are looking most earnestly in the Christian Church today and in Christian ministers today. And I am convinced that it is in our free churches where, of all places, they should be able to find it.

This is not an arrogant and un-ecumenical presumption. It is simply a recognition that an independent church, by its very nature, depends utterly upon the Holy Spirit, and derives its essential meaning from its expressed purpose of living with and by the presence of this Spirit in its midst. We have no discipline and no authority except that of Jesus Christ, exercised among us by the power of his Holy Spirit.

Our early Fathers of London and Leyden said "Jesus is Lord." They demanded freedom only to obey Him. In the life of their churches they threw themselves completely upon Him saying, "Lord, if this is true: if indeed, where

*Pastor, Eliot Church, Newton, Mass.

two or three are gathered together in Thy Name Thou art there in the midst of them, be in *our* midst, lead *us,* be *our* Guide and God!"

They conceived a whole way of church life—or rather, they discovered it in the Bible—based upon this assumption. If Christ made this promise seriously, they reasoned, then his presence amid faithful people is the only thing needed to make a congregation a true Church.

But that was a large "if" and they knew it. The presence of Christ! Without that, they were nothing—an empty, utter failure as a church; a sheer anarchy with no order or authority. But *with* it they were a conquering host, the Church of Christ in fullness and in power!

Our whole way of life, then, *depends* upon the Holy Spirit. We call ourselves "gathered" churches—gathered *by* Christ and *around* Christ. We bind ourselves in each church by covenant-agreement to Him and to our fellow Christians to "Walk in the ways of the Lord known and to be made known unto us." We are "congregationalists" because we believe it is in the congregation, in the gathering of the two or three, that Christ comes most powerfully to men and most surely leads them. The *people* of the Church are crucially important because it is through them that the Spirit speaks and makes his will known. This is why our life as churches is governed ideally not by committees but by a gathering of all the members together in a "Church Meeting."

Our faithful, ridiculous assumption is that *if* we live this way, Christ's Holy Spirit will directly and truly guide us in all our doings. He is all we have—our only guide and our only help. Therefore, looking across the spectrum of the Christian Church, we who accept no rule of bishop or council are the ones who should be even more dependent than others on the rule of the Holy Spirit.

But if we are to be a *people* of the Spirit, we, above all men, must insure that our ministry is a *ministry* of the Spirit; and that our efforts to communicate the gospel are made uniquely and supremely through the power of the Spirit. I cannot help but believe that this is a very special ministry which God has given to us particularly, to perform.

I

THIS MINISTRY OF the Spirit, I believe, *must begin in preaching.*

Preaching is not to be cut short, deemphasized, and ruled out simply because we have not shone as preachers over the last three decades. Was it not Mark Twain who suggested that for sheer excitement, interest, and persuasion there was nothing that could "beat a man talking?" For all the symbols of art and architecture, and the impact of religious drama, preaching is still the best means we have of telling a glorious gospel to people in need.

But our preaching is not going to improve just by better diction, or more compelling illustration, or the "actor's touch." It is the Spirit that we need; the haunting awareness as we mount our pulpit steps that we are "in the hands of the living God" and that this is indeed, a "fearful thing." We need the knowledge that it is God's Word we speak and not our own; that God is there in that church with us, his Spirit brooding over the face of our congregation waiting to carry our words as winged arrows to the hearts of those who need them most.

For our Congregational and Reformed fathers preaching was an exciting thing, a supernatural experience, because they believed the Holy Spirit to be present.

I believe the difference between preaching with the Spirit and preaching without it is the difference between the man who thinks he is speaking his own words—his own beautiful and eloquent words—and the man who is trying to let his poor and stumbling words be the vehicle of the mighty Word of God. It is the spirit of Paul's "so it is not I who live, but Christ who liveth in me!"

In a free tradition like ours there is nothing but the Spirit of God to authenticate our preaching. Our fathers planned it that way. Woe unto us, then, if we preach not the gospel with hearts wide open to the movement of that Spirit!

This will be our power. This, if anything, will communicate the gospel to the needs of men. And we pastors of free churches should be—by our tradition—the ones most ready and open to be so used by God.

II

And yet, even more as pastors do we free churchmen have an opportunity to minister through the Spirit, and to communicate to people the bidding, binding love of God. The ideal of the shepherd caring for his flock, of the faithful pastor going in and out among his people is losing ground among us. "Pastoral calling is a hold-over from our irrelevant, nineteenth century past," some say. "And if not irrelevant, it is at least impossible," say many more.

The cry of so many young ministers is "Let the people come to me. They know where to find me. I am in my office every day from one until three." But people do not come. Hundreds of people, not sick and neurotic, but bearing real and heavy burdens do not come because somehow they think they are not important enough for the minister's time.

We have set ourselves up as counsellors, amateur psychiatrists, and, if our seminary programs in psychiatry and religion have done this, they have done us wrong. God called us to be shepherds, ministers who go out seeking the lost souls and the troubled hearts.

Many of the deepest pastoral needs in our parishes we would never even know about unless we had stumbled upon them in the homes of our people. Surely, our job is to find these needs, to bring the love of Christ to them, and thus to help and to bind together in a fellowship of healing and strength these people whom God has given us.

As autonomous churches we have so few mechanical, ecclesiastical means of binding the people of our congregations together. In fact, the false tradition of individualism that has grown up among us keeps many from thinking they even need their fellow-members or their ministers!

And yet we are "congregational" churches. We are a fellowship. We are people presumably "gathered" around Christ: people who find help and encouragement from the Spirit of Christ ministered through the fellowship. We need terribly, therefore, to be bound together; to have some person and some power constantly meeting us where we live and helping us, and drawing us into the heart of the fellowship and the life of the Church.

The fact is that all men need this. To be made part of the redeeming, loving community of Christ is what every man needs. And when a pastor takes the trouble to come out, to draw him in, this in itself becomes a demonstration, a communication of the love and Spirit of Christ.

God's Spirit bids men always, and when we as ministers allow ourselves to be used so transparently in this mission, men will be reached by God and our ministries will be spiritual ministries in the best New Testament sense.

Our special opportunity is that we have no other way of binding the fellowship together. Our freedom has stripped us of the legal and mechanical forms some other denominations have. But it has left us free to be more uniquely instruments of the Spirit. Therefore, we have a high calling to fulfill as pastors of our people: one which is especially ours and which we heed not at our peril.

III

But perhaps the most unique ministry we have as free churchmen is *our ministry as administrators.* I wonder if there is a minister alive who has not felt the sheer burden of church administra-

tion. "All those committee meetings, all those senseless but somehow necessary projects, all that machinery of church power-structure! How can the administration of a church ever have the thrust of Christ's Spirit about it, ever minister redeemingly to people, ever increase the power of Christ in men's lives?" These are the questions we so frequently ask ourselves in secret.

Our Congregational fathers knew a way. Their descendants in England call it the Church Meeting—a gathering together of *all* the people of the church once each month to do the business of the church in an attitude of prayer and with a yearning to do Christ's will and not their own.

"It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us" the early Congregationalists used to say of the decisions made in their Church Meetings. And they could say it because they fulfilled the Biblical requirement that "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

What a way to do church business! Slow, to be sure. But full of a spirit that few other kinds of meetings can ever have.

Their decisions are unanimous, because if it is Christ's will they seek, it cannot be divided. Each person is encouraged to take part, and every man's word is respected, since he might just possibly be the bearer of the Lord's will to this congregation. Faith deepens in such a church because it is a meeting for prayer, and because—if the people are honest—Christ often works wonders in their midst.

As pastors of free churches it is in this kind of church administration that we have been called to lead our people—a kind of administration in which their faith is challenged, their presence is needed, and their prayers are expected. The fact that few of our churches are living this way is but the measure of our opportunity.

Here again, it is the Spirit of God that can rise above us, while using us, to reach out through the "two or three" to those in our congregations who most desperately need to be healed and helped, and brought close to God and to the fellowship of His people.

By leading our people, not through committees, but through the fellowship itself where Christ can be known and felt with a special power, we have an opportunity almost unique among the denominations, to be a Spirit-filled Church and to communicate the Gospel even in the most mundane area of church administration.

Conclusion

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION LIKE this, pastoral care like this, and preaching like this are a living-out in church life of the Gospel our Lord has sent us to proclaim. It is living the Gospel in such a way that the Spirit of the One Who *is* the gospel shines through and communicates its power to people. It communicates because it is of God and not of us.

And yet our privilege is that we have been called into a "way" which is peculiarly and wonderfully open to using even ordinary men like ourselves for the telling of the message a world is waiting to hear. This is our "Ministry of the Spirit."

BRITISH-AMERICAN PREACHERS' EXCHANGE

READERS OF THE QUARTERLY are familiar with the parish-to-parish exchange of churches conducted by the International Congregational Council. The QUARTERLY would like in this issue to call attention to a different though similar program conducted by the National Council of Churches. In this program, as distinct from that of the ICC, preachers merely do supply work, preaching in a different pulpit each Sunday, instead of exchanging parsonages and staying in one place for the whole period of the exchange.

History

The interdenominational exchange of preachers between Great Britain and the United States began in the summer following the close of World War I. In 1920, formal visits by noted clergymen from each country were organized. The Federal Council of Churches designated Arthur J. Brown as Chairman and Nehemiah Boynton as Secretary for this activity, administered through its Department of Relations with Religious Bodies in Europe. In the early years the exchange program was described as "Friendly Visitors." By 1931, the exchange was linked to the work of the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches, and the Pulpit Exchange procedures set up by Charles S. Macfarland and Henry A. Atkinson were continued through the leadership of Linley V. Gordon and Harry N. Holmes.

Following the establishment of the National Council of Churches in 1950, this exchange program became the cooperative undertaking of the British Council of Churches and the National Council, led in the United States by Robbins W. Barstow. With the discontinuance of the Department of Ecumenical Relations of the National Council, responsibility for administering the Preachers' Exchange was assigned in January 1958 to General Administration. An Assistant General Secretary gives administrative direction to this work, with Miss Helen G. Yergin assisting him in the development of this program in the U.S.A. Kenneth Slack, General Secretary of the British Council of Churches, assisted by Miss Jean Owen, furnishes administrative oversight in Great Britain.

The Program

Every summer, from 75 to 90 Sunday preaching engagements are made in the churches of each of the two countries. During the week many additional appointments are filled, including addresses at ministers' conferences, Chautauqua engagements, young people's camps and conferences, fraternal luncheon clubs and Y.M.C.A. assemblies.

The exchange is primarily a "pulpit supply" or "pulpit interchange" in contrast to a "parish to parish" exchange. The interdenominational and ecumenical emphasis is primary. The policy guiding preacher placement favors assigning a preacher for one or more Sundays to pulpits of denominations other than the one to which he belongs.

Selection of Preachers

An Advisory Committee, appointed by the General Board of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A., selects the exchange preachers from America. The Preachers' Exchange Committee of the British Council of Churches certifies the exchange preachers coming to the United States from Great Britain.

The Advisory Committee carefully reviews each preacher. Persons are nominated by communion officials, by preach-

ers and congregations who have shared in the program, and by members of the Advisory Committee. The counsel of the appropriate communion official is generally sought before appointing a preacher to the exchange team.

Finance

The travel costs of the exchange are borne by the individual minister. Weekend hospitality and honoraria contributed by the host churches help each clergyman to cover partially his travel costs. The sponsoring Councils provide the funds required for the administrative costs of the exchange program.

If your church would like to participate in the exchange be sure to correspond with Miss Helen G. Yergin, National Council of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N. Y.

Following is a list of our churches which have participated in the program in recent years:

Congregational Christian:
First Plymouth, Englewood, Colo.
First, Darien, Conn.
Center, Manchester, Conn.
Center, New Haven, Conn.
United, New Haven, Conn.
Edgewood, New Haven, Conn.
First, Stamford, Conn.
Topsfield, Mass.
Plymouth, Shaker Heights, Cleveland, Ohio
Plymouth Church of the Pilgrims, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Broadway, New York, N. Y.
Oneonta, South Pasadena, Calif.
Second, Grand Rapids, Mich.
Plymouth, Minneapolis, Minn.
Westfield, N. J.
First, Albuquerque, New Mexico
First, Madison, Wis.
Brooklyn Heights, Cleveland, Ohio

Evangelical and Reformed:
Grace, Akron, Ohio
Zion, Cincinnati, Ohio

"MY SON, MY SON . . . ."

by JAMES L. KIDD*

Text: Exodus 15: 23-25 "And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. . . . And the Lord showed him (Moses) a tree and he threw it into the water and the water became sweet."

IT ISN'T VERY HARD to imagine Moses and his band of Israelites struggling across the wilderness following their hazardous escape from Egypt. They had gone for three days without food or water and it must have been with tremendous anticipation that they ran to the stream of Marah. Gasping for breath through their dry, cracked lips they hastened to this stream that promised so much relief—only to discover that the water was bitter. We can easily imagine their chagrin and disappointment. It is reported that St. Theresa, a great saint of the Church, dumped from her cart into a snow drift early one morning on her way to Mass, was overheard to sigh, "Oh, Lord, it is no wonder you have so few followers the way you treat them." Moses and his followers must have felt that way upon their bitter discovery beside the stream of Marah. Life is often filled with bitterness and often does the cup overflow even for those who seek to follow the Lord Jesus.

This past week our family had occasion to drink some of Marah's bitter waters. We brought our two sons to the Children's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts, and learned that both of them are victums of cystic fibrosis, next to leukemia the second most serious of all childhood diseases. The average age at death, according to a study given me at Children's Hospital, is less than five years. My bright, active, handsome five year old son, Bruce, and our helpless, cheerful six month old son, Peter, outwardly normal children, hold within their bodies a fatal flaw that will someday kill them. So now we watch our children living beneath the sword of Damocles, a sword that hangs suspended above their heads by a very slender thread, a thread that may break at any time and bring an end to their young lives. We have found the waters of Marah very bitter indeed, so bitter that we have found them almost impossible to drink. I share this with you, not because we want any pity, for that is the last thing we want either for ourselves or for the children. But I share this with you because of my need as a Christian to witness to my faith in the face of personal tragedy.

You will remember that God showed Moses a tree which he was to "throw into the water and the water became sweet." God doesn't always take away the tragedies in our lives, but he can show us, make available to us, the ingredient that can take away their bitterness. When the import of the news first struck us we were both deeply grief-stricken. For the first time since I was a little boy I wept with great sobs that shook my body and my soul. But then God showed us the tree of our faith that had been there all along. And it took away the bitterness from this little pool of life's waters.

THE FIRST REASON the bitterness was gone is that we believe very strongly

*A sermon preached in the First Church, Pelham, N. H., Sunday, August 21, 1960.

in an afterlife. Because Christ was raised we have hope. St. Paul has said, "If Christ be not raised, then your faith is in vain and we are, of all people, most to be pitied." It is no tragedy for our sons to die, at least, not for them. Eternity with a great and gentle Father, a God of Love and Compassion, cannot be viewed by the Christian as a tragedy. Our boys will never die. For while we may commit these bodies to the ground, their spirits return to the God who gave them.

Catherine Marshall tells in her book, *A Man Called Peter,* about her own little son who was also incurably ill. He began to grow worse and realized he was going to die. "Mother," he said, "what is it like to die? Does it hurt?" Tears came to her eyes, she retreated to the kitchen to care for something on the stove and realized the question must be answered. "Kenneth," she began, "you remember when you were a very tiny boy and you would play all day long very hard and when night came you were so very tired that you would fall asleep on Mother's bed? That was not your bed, it was not where you belonged. And you would stay there a little while. In the morning, much to your surprise, you would wake up and find yourself in your own bed in your own room. You were there because someone had loved you and taken care of you. Your father had come with big strong arms and carried you away." She paused to catch her breath and continued, "Kenneth, death is just like that. We just wake up one morning to find ourselves in the other room—where we belong—because the Lord Jesus loved us." She said that little Kenneth never questioned again but he believed. And several weeks later he fell asleep just as she had said. The first reason the bitterness is gone is because our faith includes a passionate belief in eternal life. May we never become so possessive of our children that we forget that they belong ultimately to the Eternal Parent.

St. Paul has expressed the second element in our faith which has helped destroy the bitterness. He has said, "All things work together for good to them that love the Lord." I can imagine some kind soul saying with regard to my boys, "God's will be done." I cannot believe that this is God's will, that God would make my children sick, that God wills any of his children to suffer. We forget that we live in an evil world and that demonic forces press in upon us from all sides. It is this evil that is responsible for the suffering in life and not Almighty God who loves us and heals us when we let him. I cannot blame God for the careless nurse who permits her patient to suffer or for the surgeon's unsteady hand which allows his patient to die. I do not blame God for the stoning of Stephen, the jailing of Paul or the betrayal of Christ. These are the works of demonic forces and evil, sinful men.

But God, the eternal Parent, takes these evils, these tragedies of life and uses them victoriously. He transforms them into victories of faith and history. He used the stoning of Stephen to help convert the stone-hearted Saul through the witness of the dying martyr, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." He took the converted Paul, made him the greatest apostle of the Church and, after an evil society had thrown him into jail to rot and die, inspired him to write the stirring letters that comprise so large and vital a part of our New Testament. And finally, he took the treacherous betrayal of Christ and transformed this most gigantic tragedy of history into the redemption of the world. God is not responsible for the bitter waters of life, but He takes them and makes them sweet; He transforms them into instruments of strength and power. He does this if we allow Him to do so. For if we do not believe, we have no hope, and without hope we refuse to allow God to work his miracle of redemption in our lives. "All things work together for good to them

that love the Lord." I do not know how God will use the tragedy that has come into our life. But perhaps He will use it to deepen my own faith, to open wider the eyes of my soul and make me a more effective minister of his Gospel.

It is a fact of life that the soul deepens and stretches through suffering. Spiritual strength comes through suffering just as physical prowess is earned by much sweat and many groans. The spirit of man grows as it is strained to exhaustion, too. And may God help us all to understand this as the inevitable tragedies of life pay their call upon us.

THE LAST REASON the bitterness has been taken away is that we hope. We hope that God will inspire the scientists whose brains penetrated the secret of the atom to penetrate the mystery of this dread disease that has our two sons almost strangled in its inexorable grasp. We believe that God works through the minds and fingers of the physicians. But we hope primarily because we believe in prayer. Many mysterious things have happened as God has answered the prayers of the faithful. It seems unavoidable that God has left some things contingent upon our prayers just as He has left many things contingent upon our thought and work. Prayer has transformed despair into victory time and time again. May I ask you to pray for our boys, that if it is possible God will heal them. And may our prayers always be guided by the example of our Lord as he approached the agony of the Cross, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, yet not my will but thine be done."

I now find myself in a position to understand King David's lament upon the death of his son Absalom, "Oh Absalom, my son, Absalom, my son, I would to God I had died instead of thee, Absalom, my son, my son." Yet thank God we have a special ingredient that King David did not have, a tree that has been able to take away the bitterness, a faith to remove the bitterness from this little pool of life's waters—and leave us free to love.

Amen.

FURTHER THOUGHTS ON WORSHIP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

by HARLAND G. LEWIS*

What should be the unique act of the Church—its worship of God—becomes a pale imitation of the world's methods of inspiring, soothing and encouraging.

IN THE SUMMER 1959 issue of the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY there appeared a short account of the study and adoption of an Order of Morning Worship as entered upon by the deacons and members of the First Church of Christ, Congregational, of Farmington, Connecticut. The little story described how that church sought to make its present worship practices grow out of deep rootage in the Gospel and its own Reformed and Congregational tradition. Mere antiquarianism was not the motive, though a going back beyond the last blurred hundred years of Christian worship to early New England practices would have been instructive. The intent was to discover the authentic substance and shape of the whole Christian past, as it found characteristic expression and form in Reformed practice, and to use this as base and guide to relevance and clarity in worship today.

I was totally unprepared for the response which that little story called forth. No sooner had the article appeared than I began to receive letters. I have now a fat folder of inquiries from ministers all over the land, including one fascinating interchange of correspondence with a minister of the Church of Scotland who saw the article in a copy of the QUARTERLY sent him by an American friend. The questing and concerned nature of this correspondence leads inevitably to a number of reflections, and hence this postscript, little more than a year later.

First, it seemed to suggest a basic uneasiness and hunger on the part of ministers at least, and, hopefully, on the part of churches, reflecting a sense that all was not quite sound and healthy with the central act of the Church. When the Church gathers at worship, a clean, basic, and powerful note seems absent. Worship is often something "done" or "put on." The jarring, searching, restoring motion of worship is lost and corrupted by many things: the wrong expectation of the people, for example, or the wrong understanding of the minister. He may see himself in a manipulative role, guiding them, by use of music, voice, lights, architecture, into an "experience" which is "religious." Secular culture invades the sanctuary, and secular methods are there employed. What should be the distinctive and unique act of the Church—its worship of God—becomes a pale imitation of the world's methods of inspiring, soothing, and encouraging. These things are good, but they are not worship.

Letter after letter began by saying "I have wanted to do something similar to what you have done in your church but I don't know how to begin. Can you tell me how your deacons became interested in this question?" This leads to the second reflection, as to whether or not the courses that ministers have had in Worship and Liturgics in Seminary have properly fitted them for their leadership in this central realm of the life of the Church. What have ministers read out of their courses in Theology and Church History that can bring aid to them at

*Pastor, The First Church of Christ, Congregational, Farmington, Conn.

this point in their need? If the letters I have give any clue, they suggest that most worship courses are concerned with the "how" of worship rather than with the "what" and "why" of worship. It is probably true that in the extremely marginal time given to such courses in practics a teacher can do little more than touch the surface of this area. But the letters I have had and the questions which have been put to me by dozens of ministers met at conferences, synods, and other meetings, do suggest a feeling of uneasiness and need, and a corresponding feeling of helplessness with regard to what might be the approach to the matter. These two reflections, then, first of all, arise from the response to that first article.

A preliminary comment on these reflections is that any parish minister who wishes to take the time to read a book like *An Outline of Christian Worship* by William D. Maxwell, *Principles of Christian Worship* by Raymond Abba, *Christian Worship* by Horton Davies, or *The Shape of the Liturgy* by Dom Gregory Dix, will quickly begin to sense the historical perspective and theological context in which the matter must be approached. The very word "shape" which Gregory Dix has made current in any discussion of worship stands over against what is the dominant characteristic of worship in Congregational churches, which might be termed "shapelessness." Dix makes abundantly clear that the shape of the liturgy is of genuinely apostolic origin and that there is an integrity which comes down the centuries which must lie at the very core of any act of Christian worship. He, and Maxwell also, trace the corruption and embroidering of Christian worship in the various ages of the Church's life, and make abundantly clear that the very shape and substance of worship itself is one of the great clues to the health of the Church at any time as it lives in the world and interacts with its particular age and culture. This is so now.

In his annual report to the New Hampshire Congregational Conference in 1959, Supt. Frederick Alden said, "Many have no clear idea of what worship is, on Sunday morning or at any other time; that worship has behind it a definite set of ideas which can be stated in a description of what we are doing when we gather and engage in public worship of Almighty God; that there is movement in worship, a progression which begins on the plane of praise, descends into the valley of humility, climbs the hill of assurance, ventures out renewed and resolved on the main road; that worship is a work involving attention, conscious effort, concentration, cooperation, and a new perspective; that the benefits are a new perspective, certain basic reminders of what we so easily forget, a reinforcement of spirit, a refilling of the whole heart and soul life of a man." Dr. Alden indicated that as a conference minister he was eager to aid churches to undertake basic studies of the nature and role of worship in their life. This suggests that the conference may be a source of help and advice to the beleaguered local minister, out of seminary, eager to read, and desiring encouragement, guidance, and support.

Reflecting further on the inquiries and questions which have come to me I have been led to feel that the contemporary revival of interest in Biblically oriented theology has not carried over into a corresponding application of these new insights in the field of worship. The basic structure, for example, within which worship must always be understood is that of the Biblical categories of Creator and creature.

Within this structured situation every act of worship must take place. The creature cannot worship himself, and he cannot worship things of his own manufacture, without going at cross purposes to what "is." He must stand before the Creator with everything that is implicit in such a relationship. This means awe, it means praise, it means thanksgiving, it

means humility, confession, listening, obedience. It means much more: every realm of life is involved, all within this basic structure and understanding. How simple it seems. Yet in how many churches is worship little more than "mood managing." It is something in which people engage for psychological reassurance, and for whatever accrues from the gathering of human beings together in a pretty place to hear pleasant music and to listen to helpful thoughts. Until worship has at least this basic theological integrity this act of the Church will always deny the integrity of the Gospel and blight the health of the Church itself. Worship is the response of the Church to God's saving act in Christ. Dazed gratitude and joyful thanksgiving are always characteristic.

Douglas Horton in his 1958 Beecher lectures talked about *The Meaning of Worship* and the entire series was an attempt to answer the questions, "What does the living Christ ask of those who worship in his name?" and "What does it mean to bring *all* to Christ, and to do *all* in the presence of Christ, and for *all* to come into his presence?" This kind of questioning helps highlight the central urgency of this matter, and the desperate corruptions which ensue when the question is asked or answered wrongly.

When we look to our heritage we see that Congregationalism, in the Reformed tradition, looks back to Calvin faith-wise, but not polity-wise. Calvin's original insistence on the unity and co-existence of the Word read and preached, and the Word broken in Sacrament, was already distorted by the time the English nonconformists sought to re-iterate it. Their context of rebellion against Anglicanism tended to emphasize revolt against altar, priesthood, and implicitly, sacrament; and rebellion against hierarchy tended to over-emphasize freedom in polity, and to detach it from its rootage in faith. Polity became a dominant concern to the negelect of the full reformed faith when the Reformation left the continent, as witness the obsession with order of Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Anglicans. In this context even the Word read and preached were vulnerable to distortion by an excessive latitude carrying over from the preoccupation with freedom which always tended on towards anarchy. Down through the 18th Century, the Enlightenment, rationalism, Deism further eroded the solid centrality of the Word and preaching became an excessive exposition of human wisdom. In this low period, adrift from all bearings, non-conformists cast about for an order, a structure of worship, and they fell upon the order for daily Morning Prayer from Cranmer. This is an office, not a full-orbed liturgical action. It is not even ante-communion without the Liturgy of the Upper Room. This is essentially the base of the order of morning worship in many a Congregational church today, with occasional observance of the Lord's Supper almost irrelevently tacked on.

The lack of solid rationale for worship left the door wide open for serious abuses when the thinness and shallowness of ordinary worship, its excessive emphasis on the personality and eloquence of the minister, and its non-satisfying rootlessness began to be felt. This abuse has shown itself in recent decades in an often non-discriminate borrowing of furniture and form from more ritualistic groups. Chancels, Gothic churches, stoles, and other appurtenances were appropriated without a rationale to support them. Things were done, buildings designed, orders of worship constructed, for purely aesthetic and psychological reasons. Emphasis on feelings and moods, the Schleiermacher and Ritschl theological approach, were dominant. People were to be "motivated." So Congregationalists tended to enter this century.

P. T. Forsyth was among the first to discern the abuse inherent in excessive emphasis on freedom, and he bade us never to forget that ours was a "founded freedom," and that there were some things we are in no way free to do, such

as to abandon the holiness of God or to ignore the unique and saving act of Christ on the cross, done for us and our salvation. The freedom to create a worship order of any kind, and to borrow from any liturgy of the Church or to use any prayer book, cannot be denied, but when it is done without a knowledge of what is truly and authentically Congregational or Reformed in the fullest sense the result is a basic betrayal of our inheritance.

So a free church which rejects its past in a false use of its freedom, or which uncritically appropriates its past with a false sense of history, are both guilty of serious error. Perhaps there may be stirring among us a real hunger to discover what an authentic and cleanly structured act of corporate worship may be. We may discover that a return to the austere, dignified, and relatively simple order of our fathers really criticizes and nourishes the life of today set in the midst of its excessive comfort, opulence, and confusion. But we will see that any congregation which on purely aesthetic grounds (and bad aesthetics at that!) adopts odd vestments, curious musical interludes, strange and bizarre interpolations by minister and people, will simply blunt and abuse the life of God's people gathered for their most distinctive and unique act. Liturgy does not necessarily mean complicated marching and counter-marching, the use of altars, candles, and other equipment, a performance or a pageant. It means that the shape of worship is clear, the movement of worship is obvious, and that the interaction between God and man is both implicit and explicit.

It may be that the real liturgical revival may only be beginning to stir in Congregationalism as both heightened interest in our tradition and deepened interest in Biblical theology converge. It seems particularly exciting that at this moment there should come the mandate to unite with another rich lineage in the Reformed tradition. This confluence will give us further opportunity to examine our rootage, our history, and our present practices and rationale, with a keen effort to understand this moment in history and the present cultural context, as we give expression to worship rationale and practice in the United Church of Christ. In recent years fresh, strong, new liturgical life has broken out in churches born of union in South India and in Canada. May it be so with us.

THE STUDY GROUP

Prof. Robert Allard of The University of Chicago has responded to our invitation for ideas on informal group study with an announcement concerning the first Home Study Course in Theology to be provided by The University of Chicago. These Home Study Courses may be pursued by individuals no matter how widely scattered across the country but where possible the Committee on In-Service Training of our Commission on Church and Ministry encourages ministers of the church to sign up for these courses in small groups. In order to encourage this type of Group Study our Committee on In-Service Training may be able to provide a limited number of scholarships for this projected new series, to cover the cost of registration, books, etc. Anyone interested in this type of scholarship should write the Chairman of the Committee on In-Service Training, Edward W. Brueseke, 235 S. St. Peter Street, South Bend 17, Indiana.

Reports are also given from two more local Study Groups. Would you like to share your home study experience with your fellow pastors? If so, write to the Study Group Editor in care of the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY.

A HOME STUDY COURSE IN THEOLOGY

by **ROBERT ALLARD**

"INTRODUCTION TO Religious Existentialism" is the first of a projected new series of Home-Study courses in theology at the graduate level to be offered by the University of Chicago. These courses are designed for ministers who wish to continue their professional education and for thoughtful lay persons who have the equivalent of a bachelor's degree. A group enrollment plan permits a number of persons to share the benefits of instruction at minimum cost.

The idea for a Home-Study program grew out of the experiences of William Rainey Harper when he began teaching Greek and Hebrew to ministers and teachers by mail before coming to Chicago. When he became the first president of the University of Chicago, Home-Study was an integral part of its educational program. Since 1892, more than 100,000 men and women have enrolled in this unique program. Today, over 5,000 adults are continuing their education by mail at their own pace, time and place. Their median age is forty and their educational background ranges from the self-taught to the Ph.D.

Dr. Perry D. Le Fevre presently Associate Professor of Theology and Education, has written the study-guide syllabus and will be the instructor for "Introduction to Religious Existentialism." This course will present the movement of religious existentialism as a whole; introduce some of the distinctive existentialist themes; and point up the significant differences among existentialist writers. Representative works of Kierkegaard, Berdyaev, Marcel, Tillich, Bultmann, and Buber will be studied. The course will include thirty assignments and carry 3 1/3 semester hours of credit at the graduate level. It is especially recommended by Dr. Le Fevre for group study.

Perry Le Fevre received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1951. Prior to his return as Associate Professor of Theology and Education, he was chairman of the Department of Religion,

Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois. His most recent book, *The Christian Teacher,* followed his publication of *The Prayers of Kierkegaard.* His articles appear in a number of theological journals, and he lectures at numerous colleges, universities, and educational conferences. As instructor of this first Home-Study course in theology, Dr. Le Fevre expects to engage in "conversations-by-mail" with Home-Study registrants around the world.

In announcing the series, Dean Jerald C. Brauer said:

"This first Home-Study course and the others which will follow are another example of our abiding concern to provide relevant theological education in the best scholarly tradition of the University. It is only fitting that the University of Chicago should renew this fine tradition begun by William Rainey Harper of offering a program of continuing professional education to qualified ministers and providing educated lay persons with the opportunity to enlarge their understanding, appreciation, and participation in the theological enterprise of the churches."

Mr. Brauer also disclosed that a second course, "Tragedy, Comedy, and Human Existence," by Dr. Nathan A. Scott, Jr., Associate Professor of Theology and Literature, will be available after January 1, 1961. This course will include a study of such authors as Faulkner, Ibsen, Melville, Sophocles, Moliere, Shaw, Pirandello and Shakespeare and is also recommended for group study.

This new University program is another effort by members of the theological faculty to assist ministers and educated laity in keeping abreast of the perennial issues of our faith as seen by contemporary theologians and other thinkers of our day. Since it is offered through the Home-Study Department, adults may enroll at any time and have a full year or more to complete any particular course. There are no formal prerequisites. The only requirement is that persons be capable of enjoying and benefiting from the particular undergraduate or graduate level course in which they wish to enroll. The new theological courses provide an excellent tool for systematic continuing professional education for individual ministers or a small group who can meet occasionally.

They also provide a means of assisting educated and thoughtful lay persons, individually or in small groups, to engage in a discipline of reading, thinking and writing about the great issues of our faith.

For complete details about Divinity 371 and other courses, write:

Box M Q
The Home-Study Department
The University of Chicago
Chicago 37, Illinois

A REPORT FROM WISCONSIN

In compliance with the invitation in the last number of the Quarterly I called a conference of ministers and wives of the United Church for a study session. We took the subject of baptism and followed the articles in the Quarterly. We took up the questions and situation on "What would you do?" What differences there were were not those between the CC and E and R. ministers. On the first question, "What would you do if you were called to the hospital to baptize a child that was dying?" our thought was that we were under pressure from our congregations largely because of the attitudes devloped by Lutherans and Catholics, and that if one or both parents were church members we would baptize the child, although we would try to dissuade the parents from having the child baptized as we believe baptism is not necessary for salvation for children, and that is the attitude of our churches.

On the second question we took about

the same position. We would try to dissuade them from having the baptism there at the hospital, but rather when both parents are well to have it in the church sanctuary. But we would not refuse if one or both parents were church members.

Then we jumped to the sixth situation because one of our members fitted in there. He said that baptizing children is not against his convictions and he believes that as a Congregational minister he must follow the practices of the Congregational churches, but having come from a Baptist background he prefers waiting until children come to the age of discretion and can choose for themselves.

It was our consensus of opinion that there should be parental freedom to some extent such as having sponsors or not as they wished, and having sprinkling, pouring, or immersion as they wished, but in all important things that the beliefs of the church should be followed. Of course the E and R Church has more definite rules than the CC churches. We agreed that in all except emergency cases baptism should be in a church service and that the congregation should realize that it has a responsibility. We agreed, too, that parents are more important than sponsors, and must be up before the altar or communion table with their baby, not the sponsors alone with the baby, and that the sponsors should be people of Christian faith, probably members of some church.

Those attending the Study Group were the following:

The Rev. and Mrs. Raymond Barz, E and R, of Fremont, Wis.

The Rev. and Mrs. John Seidler, E and R, of Appleton, Wis.

The Rev. and Mrs. Walter A. Smith, CC, of Seymour, Nichols, and Leeman, Wis.

The Rev. Walter H. Waeckerle, E and R, of Shawano, Wis.

The Rev. Roy C. Curless, E and R, of Cecil, Wis. standing also in CC)

The Rev. Elmer A. Becker, E and R, of Black Creek, Wis.

The Rev. Alfred C. Davis, CC, of New London and Royalton, Wis.

We have not agreed on another session, but the E & R ministers will invite the CC ministers to their fellowship meetings and perhaps may do something about studying a topic. (One suggested was *Counselling in Preparation for Marriage.*)

Reporter: WALTER A. SMITH
Seymour, Wis.

GROUP STUDY ON THE FIRING LINE

OUR MINISTER'S STUDY GROUP had its beginning last January, 1960, although for some time before that a few of us had from time to time mentioned the idea and our need for some kind of small group of pastors which would be more than just a mere meeting. We had for some time recognized the need for a kind of in-service training, study, discussion, stimulation and debate on some very basic questions and the need for keeping up to date in our field and in other related fields.

Thus with such general ideas in mind our group met for the first time on Wednesday morning, January 13, in my home. That morning six of us were present and we spent the hour and a half talking about our needs and what each one of us expected such a group to be and how we thought we should proceed. We decided first of all that we should meet regularly and rather frequently, and we do—every two weeks, usually on a Wednesday morning beginning at 8:00 A.M. until about 10:00 A.M. and some-

mes longer. We further decided that here would, in the beginning at least, be o strict format and that we should keep ie group small and flexible as we experimented together. This we have done. Of the six of us who first met on that Wednesday, one had to drop out and nother person immediately took his lace. Just recently, two more ministers ave been added.

The first book we read and discussed ogether was H. Richard Niebuhr's book *–The Purpose of The Church and Its Ministry.* Each one of us either had a opy or immediately purchased one and ead it in preparation for the next session. At first we thought we might take urns leading the discussion from session o session and this we did for a while. However, we have gradually departed rom this as we discovered that for us his was not necessary. The group meets nd almost immediately takes off into an ntense and vital discussion of the topic or the day.

After we feel that we have studied and iscussed one book or topic dry, at least or the time being, we choose another. Thus far we have read, studied and dissed the following: Alfred R. Shands, *The Liturgical Movement and The Local Church;* Joseph E. McCabe, *The Power of God In A Parish Program;* The New Testament Articles in Volume 7 of *The Interpreter's Bible; The First Epistle of Peter;* just recently the article in the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY by John Heuss, *The True Function of A Parish; the Book of Acts.* You can see that our material is varied.

All of us have found this small group to be of immeasurable value and we look forward to each session eagerly. The make-up of the group itself helps in this we feel. Out of the now 8 members, five different seminaries are represented—Yale, Union in New York, Eden, Lancaster and Garrett. The eight of us are of varied ages and backgrounds, the one distinguishing feature being that 6 of us are in National Missions work serving new mission churches. We all live in the same general geographical area and are all Evangelical and Reformed ministers.

The members of the group are: Robert Kettelhut, Fred Traut, Louis Lammert, Gary Scheuer, Otis E. Young, Warner Siebert, Don Kelly and Louis Speller.

Reporter: OTIS E. YOUNG

THE QUARTERLY FORUM

A CODE OF MINISTERIAL ETHICS

WE WHO HAVE responded to the upward calling of the Christian ministry ever need to be reminded to lead a life worthy of the calling to which we have been called, that God the Father may be glorified through our works, that the Church of Jesus Christ may be built, that the good name of the ministry may be honored, and that we may be good ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ to those whom we serve.

To these ends this CODE has been devised and is dedicated.

I. OF THE MINISTER'S STEWARDSHIP

The minister gives full time to his parish in its community, engaging in other work or activity, besides his responsibility to his denomination, only with the consent of his Consistory.

The minister budgets his time so that he will have regular periods for study and intellectual improvement.

The minister himself practices the devotional habits he recommends to his people.

The minister is fair to his family, not neglecting to include time for it as he budgets his time and plans his schedule.

The minister reserves some time each week for recreation. His "day off" should be, as far as possible, a regular occurrence each week.

The minister is a Christian steward, knowing from his own experience what it means to give regularly and proportionately, as well as cheerfully and gratefully.

The minister puts service above remuneration. He does not judge his service by his salary.

The minister is prompt in the payment of his bills, and does not borrow from individual parishioners. Neither does he expect something for nothing.

II. OF THE MINISTER'S RELATIONSHIP TO HIS PARISH

The minister at all times maintains the dignity of his holy office.

The minister is available at all times for spiritual counsel and aid to any of his parishioners.

The minister never divulges any information that comes to him in confidence.

The minister speaks the truth in love when, because of his prophetic responsibility, he must take a stand in any controversy.

The minister is Christlike in his personal attitudes toward and conduct with all people regardless of race, class, creed, sex, or age.

The minister, when severing relations with his parish, does so only through the regular constitutional means.

III. OF THE MINISTER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH FELLOW MINISTERS

The minister has a relationship of frankness, cooperation, and mutual helpfulness with other ministers.

The minister does not interfere with the work of another parish. Especially he avoids the practice of proselyting.

The minister does not perform ministerial acts in another parish, except in rare instances and upon the request of the minister of the other parish.

This CODE is presented to the readers of THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY by the Committee on Pastoral Relations of the Commission on Church and Ministry (E. & R.) in the hope that there will be helpful comments and reactions forthcoming. Correspondence may be sent to the chairman of the Committee, the Rev. Harold C. Baer, Christ Church, Marshall and Noble Streets, Norristown, Pa.

The minister speaks well, or not at all, of a fellow minister. This is especially true for "successors and predecessors."

The minister who has been succeeded by another never interferes with the work of his successor. This includes the retired minister, or the minister without charge, who of necessity resides within the bounds of any former parish.

The minister is cooperative with ministers of other denominations.

V. OF THE MINISTER'S OTHER RELATIONSHIPS

The minister is willing to serve whenever possible, without doing harm to his own parish, in a community enterprise.

The minister is careful in giving endorsement to any cause or movement, agency, fund drive, or persons about which he has doubt. He does not withhold it from good causes.

The minister is honest in his use of other persons' material for sermons, writings, church papers, etc. by giving credit, securing permission, etc.

The minister presents himself to the public in an attire fitting to his profession, and keeps himself well groomed.

The minister sets a high moral standard of speech and conduct.

The minister respects the time of others, including the matters of answering correspondence and making necessary reports promptly.

The associate minister—in larger churches with multiple staffs—respects the minister as the head of the parish. He does not undermine the place of the minister, nor attempt to attract a personal following. Conversely, the minister offers to his associate every consideration and opportunity for a well rounded ministry.

The minister, as a public interpreter of divine revelation and human duty, speaks the truth in love as he has been given to understand it.

The minister always displays a genuine loyalty to the denomination of which he is a part.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

I have been looking through the last number of the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY and want to say how valuable I think it is in every way.

I was glad to see the translation of a poem by Rilke. I also liked the poem by Victor Ford, and was glad to see the article by Alfred Swan. This is the kind of continuing resource for a minister after seminary study which is very desirable.

Sincerely yours,
AMOS N. WILDER
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Editor:

I am glad if the paper on *The Depth of Existence,* discussing existentialism, was of use to the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY.

It has been called to my attention that *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* should be attributed to Jung, and not Freud. Of course, this is correct.

I am only sorry, too, that the footnote in my manuscript did not appear in the printing, confessing debt and suggesting further study of Roger Shinn's Reflection Book, *The Existentialist Posture.* It is succinct and satisfying.

Faithfully,
ALFRED W. SWAN

Baptism

Dear Editor:

The recent issue of the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY wrestling with the problems surrounding baptism, confirmation and church membership is excellent. I would like to respond to Mr. Shorman's questions.

Is infant baptism a quaint custom or a solemn vow? My thinking and praying about this question started four years ago during a family camp experience at Camp Casadero, in our Northern California Conference. We shared a seminar with two dozen lay parents using as our theme "Does it matter what parents believe?" After three days with these devout laymen, I was forced by my own convictions to believe that infant baptism was one of the following:

1. Solemn Vow. Infant baptism is a solemn vow, a sacrament, if one believes in a "congenital" type of original sin. That is, that an infant needs baptism for salvation. I was forced to consider, in my encounter with those laymen, that infant baptism was a holdover rite of the orthodox church with its roots in a theology we no longer hold valid. It is a bit of the unfinished business of the Reformation.
2. Quaint Custom. Infant baptism became a quaint custom or worse for me when I considered that I did not believe in a "congenital' type of original sin. Indeed there *is* sin in the world and the poetic symbol of Adam and his fall have great meaning, but I could not interpret the matter in the classical orthodox manner. Original sin is social, not "congenital," environmental, not hereditary. A baby is born with an infinite capacity for sinfulness or saintliness, but that capacity needs experience to call it into fact!

Baptism is a rite of cleansing. The visible symbol of water is the outward sign of an invisible grace wrought by God in the heart of a believer, infinitely personal, never second-hand! I do not believe that the vows of the parents can purchase a seat in heaven for their baby, nor is there a need to do so. From my own point of view, it seems that Mr. Shorman has pointed up the fantastically sticky problems that confront us as we practice infant baptism while at the same time abhorring the initial theological point of view that made this "sacrament" necessary.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my concern.

Yours in *agape,*

RALPH J. CAPOLUNGO

Salem, Ore.

Dear Editor:

The Autumn QUARTERLY is really hitting pay dirt, in discussions on Baptism, Confirmation and Church Membership. It is good to learn of the various customs and beliefs—not forgetting the New Testament teaching on it all.

Brother Brueseke's "Meaning of Baptism" was a most helpful review of the Evangelical and Reformed belief of Baptism. And the thought of preparing the parents in a conference beforehand is superb.

What is so easily overlooked is the fact that baptism is a sacrament, in the sense that the catechisms explain them. For a sacrament is more than symbolism, meaning a "sign;" it is also a "seal." Consequently baptism is a channel of the grace of God, or a "means of grace." For while we agree that it is not magic, it can be a vehicle of God's power and miracle.

How any church or individual can accept a member into the Church without true baptism, is a puzzle to me. For as Pastor Brueseke indicated, it is the door to entrance into the Church and the family of the redeemed.

Fraternally yours,

CALVIN FRANZ

Geneseo, Ill.

)ear Editor:

In your very interesting symposium on Baptism" in your Autumn QUARTERLY ıothing was mentioned about the re-aptism of adults.

A very prominent Christian worker ome years ago issued for "private cir-ılation only," a letter giving his reasons ır being "recently immersed," though e had received infant baptism in a resbyterian Church. As I was preparing ieetings for this brother, I met the ob-ction of a prominent clergyman of the hurch of England.

Said he: "I suppose you Yankees think iat if a man wants to be baptised two r three times, that is his business, but to s of the Church of England that is lasphemy! He has counted null and void ie name of the Holy Trinity used when is godly parents invoked the sacrament ı his infancy."

Query: Is baptism a Sacrament or a ite?

Re "Lolita" favorably mentioned in our summer issue—one need not walk ırough a sewer to discover its vileness. ifting up the lid at the man-hole is ıfficient. I read a part of the first chapter ıd returned the book to the City Li-rary!

With all good wishes and prayers on our behalf.

Cordially yours,
LOUIS HIEB, *Retired*
Long Beach, Calif.

More on *Lolita*

Dear Editor:

If Paul M. Schroeder was shocked and grieved to see *Lolita recommended* as the subject for a sermon, the parents of my young people and myself were outraged to see it, *Peyton Place* and *Lady Chatterly's Lover* recommended for study in a Youth Fellowship Discussion leaflet. The more so as our young people are currently studying ways and means, at their own suggestion, of getting obscene literature off the news stands.

There is only one test needed. Would Jesus of Nazareth read these books or recommend them for young people? There can be no doubt about the answer. Or of St. Paul's injunction, "whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely . . . think on these things." I can only assume that this is an example of spiritual wickedness in high places, for though I have only read a part of one of these books myself, from the reviews in purely secular publications, I can imagine few more corrupting books to place in the hands of young people.

Yours sincerely,
I. C. G. CAMPBELL
Weeping Water, Neb.

Fathers and Brethren:

The fine art of *tripmanship* is recognized by everyone who has undergone a journey.

It is the technique for getting people to ask, "Where did you go on your trip?" and similar related questions. This cannot be done in any open or obvious way. One cannot say, "That reminds me of something that happened to me in Bangkok." The rules of the game require that the question come from the other person.

Tripmanship is often a frustrating business. I can keep my watch set on Paris time for weeks after returning home, but instead of commenting about Paris time, I receive a verbal dig: "Brother, your watch is really off!" Or, again the frustration comes when the person asks a question about one's trip simply in order to use it as an opening gambit to tell about his trip. It's sort of like asking about *your* operation, in order to be able to tell about *mine!*

Sometimes a few obviously foreign objects scattered around the office, on the desk, or perhaps an article of clothing may be enough to get a person to ask the right question. But even here one has to be exceedingly careful. That Hong Kong suit must be conservative! If the clothing is too compelling in its differentness there my be a question and a strong comment all rolled into one!

But all of this levity leads to a serious matter.

Getting people to ask the right questions is one of the urgent tasks of the church. Professor Tillich once pointed out that this was one of the major tasks of evangelism. It begins with a person's asking the meaningful question, and it ends with the decision of the person for or against Christ. In this thesis, evangelism is defined not as a way of getting people to accept Christ, but as a way of presenting the issue so clearly that the person in making his own decision does so in the light of as much clear data as possible. It all begins with the right questions.

Motivation for learning, the asking of the right questions, the beginning from within, the desire to know—all of these are most relevant for the pastor in order that his sermons, for instance, be no *excursus* in a vacuum but a meaningful answer to evident needs.

Are you creating the best possible opportunities for people to ask the deepest questions of their hearts?

Fraternally yours,

Harold H. Wilke